

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

**ISSUED BY THE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

8 DECEMBER 1963
~~**TOP SECRET**~~



1. Bolivia

a. The tin miners at Catavi, who have been defying President Paz's government all year, yesterday seized four Americans along with a number of Bolivian technicians at the mines.

b. The miners say they are holding these people as hostages for the release of a pair of troublesome pro-Communist leaders of the miners' union, now in a government prison.

c. The authorities do not propose to accept the swap.

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d. This could quickly lead to gunfire and even civil war, since some 2,000 of the miners are armed and the lines are drawn for a showdown between Paz and his left-wing Vice President Juan Lechin.

e. We are suggesting to Paz that he avoid using force while the Americans are still held but try to bring pressure on Lechin for their release.

2. South Vietnam

a. Defense Minister Don admitted to Ambassador Lodge yesterday that much time had been lost in prosecuting the war against the Viet Cong.

b. Don said certain personnel adjustments were being made and should be completed by the end of the month, after which government forces would "take off."

c. He predicted results early next year.

d. Don denied that the generals were divided. He thought reports to this effect stem from the emphatic manner in which most of their number express themselves in strategy huddles.

3. Cambodia

a. Suggestions in yesterday's press dispatches out of Phnom Penh that certain Frenchmen are pushing Cambodia into Peiping's camp tend, we think, to overplay their influence.

b. The best known of these, Charles Meyer and Jean Barre, have been in Cambodia for years writing editorials for the Sihanouk press. While their opinions do, on occasion, coincide with and reinforce Sihanouk's prejudices, they have had little better luck in harnessing the mercurial prince to a set line than anyone else.

(Cont'd)

c. In the present case, we do not believe that Sihanouk wishes to commit himself irrevocably to Peiping. His request for French assistance to replace ours is an attempt to take out insurance.

d. France has, however, been slow to react; thus, Defense Minister Messmer's visit scheduled for January was described yesterday by the French foreign office as for "preliminary" talks on aid.

e. This, and the first signs of business disruption and discontent in high places, may have led Sihanouk to begin backing water a bit on terminating US aid. His negotiators were maneuvering last week to keep key parts of the program alive for another three to six months.

4. Thailand

a. Prime Minister Sarit died at 0500 this morning Washington time.

b. General Thanom Kittikachorn has called at the Palace to see the king [redacted]
[redacted]

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c. There are no reports of disturbances in Bangkok [redacted]
[redacted]

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NOTES

- A. Yugoslavia In a conversation with Tito last Thursday, Charge Kocher found him "remarkably vague" on a number of points. This could stem from the fact that he gave up certain of his responsibilities last summer, but some of his associates have been saying that the 71-year-old Tito has failed markedly in recent months.
- B. Brazil Yet another Brazilian political crisis seems to be approaching. Rio is full of rumors this weekend that President Goulart intends shortly to give his cabinet a more marked leftist cast. [REDACTED]
- C. USSR-Morocco The Soviets have assured the Moroccans that further military aid is a possibility. [REDACTED]
- D. USSR-Cuba The Soviet AN-12 heavy military transport, which we noted en route from Moscow to Cuba [REDACTED] landed at Havana yesterday.
- E. Syria The tug of war between moderate and extreme Baathists goes on [REDACTED] pro-Nasir groups have been alerted to take advantage of any opening this struggle may give them to seize power.

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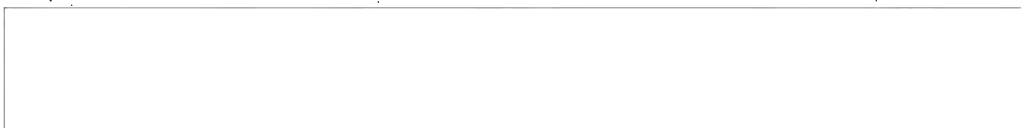
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